

# Montana and the Sky

MDT - Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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## Seeley Lake On A Roll

The Seeley Lake flying community has reason to flap its wings and pat itself on the back. A few years ago, after relentless pursuit by the local flying community, control of the Seeley Lake Airport was returned to the Montana Aeronautics Division from Missoula County. After control of the airport was put in our hands, we immediately began working with the local pilots to free them from constraints so they could develop and operate their airport as they best saw fit. Thanks to the untiring efforts of the Seeley Lake flying club, several improvements to the runway and its operations have been made with the assistance of the Aeronautics Division, a few of which include:

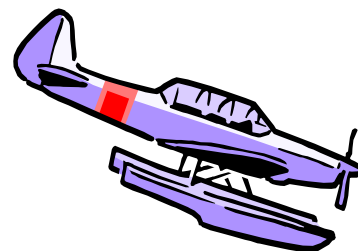
- Winter time operations and runway maintenance
- New agreements to allow flying club members to be provided coverage when doing volunteer work on the airport
- A new utility pickup for the airport
- A vast improvement in runway maintenance
- The lengthening of the airstrip by nearly 2000 feet
- The reactivation of the airport beacon
- The welcoming of current and future "through the fence" hangar and hangar/apartment agreements

- The creation of a pilots activity area, complete with tables, chairs, and even a barbecue
- Many more items both small and large, too numerous to be mentioned here

Not only were certain items of work accomplished because of the transfer of ownership, but in most pilot's eyes, the most important item that was accomplished was a much-improved relationship between the owner of the airport and the local pilots. Local flyers now feel they have gained control of their airport, back where it belongs, in the hands of the people who pay for it, the pilots and the community. What's in store for the future of Seeley Lake? Many ideas are currently being batted around, including bicycles for transient pilot use, water service for pilot and runway use, and many other ideas in the works. If you're out flying around Western Montana, be sure to drop by Seeley Lake and maybe run into town for a meal, or just enjoy the use of the pilot's activity area. Either way, the experience will be well worth it, and be sure to say thanks to the local pilots, who brought you the airport you see there.



*Chef Gerry Connell tended to the grill, satisfying lots of hungry appetites.*



*Members of the Seeley Lake Flying Club turned out in numbers to show support for the airport by hosting a barbecue in a fun-filled evening.*



*Wade Cebulski, thanked the Montana Aeronautics Division and volunteers in the local community for their support and cooperation in encouraging the efforts of the flying club.*



## Administrator's Column

### **FAA APPROVES OLDER AIRCRAFT SHOULDER HARNESS INSTALLATION WITHOUT STC**

- Charles Schuck, Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Senior Washington Representative has reported that the Federal Aviation Administration has issued a proposed policy statement which will, in essence, allow owners of certain older airplanes to install shoulder harnesses. Although the FAA prefers Supplemental Type Certification (STC) or Field Approvals the proposal agrees to "minor change" approval for shoulder harness installations without STC's for small airplanes manufactured before July 19, 1978 and in other seats of those small airplanes manufactured before December 13, 1986. Schuck stated "FAA has been very cooperative in developing this proposed policy as a 'no-hazard' type of installation, we agree with this policy and believe it will add to the safety of our older airplanes due to the simplified approval process of shoulder harness installation." If you wish to comment on the proposed policy statement ACE-00-23.561.01, you should mail to Federal Aviation Administration Small Airplane Directorate, ACE 111, Room 301, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106.

**FAA WITHDRAWS AD** - Due to strong opposition the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has withdrawn the airworthiness directive (AD) requiring a placard be placed at the fuel selector valves of nearly all Beechcraft piston engine aircraft. The placard merely states that the fuel selector valve must actually be in the proper detent position of the desired fuel tank and that fuel will not flow if the selector valve is somewhere between. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) had petitioned the FAA to withdraw the airworthiness directive arguing that positioning of the fuel selector valve is an operational issue rather than an airworthiness concern. That this should be addressed in the aircraft flight manual or pilots operating handbook. After due consideration, the FAA concurred and removed the AD.

**CONDOLENCES** - It is with great sadness that we have learned of two sudden losses within our aviation community. First we learned of the loss of Loretta Lynch, wife of Denny Lynch of Lynch Flying Service. Loretta passed away suddenly after a very short illness. Second, we learned of the accidental death of Venessa Warner 15 year old daughter of George and Rosie Warner of Dillon. On behalf of the Aeronautics Board and Division

as well as the entire Montana aviation community, I would like to extend our sincere condolences to the entire Lynch and Warner families.

### **PARK SERVICE BLASTED AT HEARING**

- During testimony before the House National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee hearing, the United States Air Tour Association (USATA) president Steve Bassett warned that the National Park Service's (NPS) efforts to curb air tour operations over federal lands will have a spill over effect that will eventually restrict all aircraft operations. Bassett charged that NPs "has consistently and unabashedly misrepresented the enormous value of air tours and the scientifically supported near non-existent impact they have on the environment." Bassett noted that while industry, NPS, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) developed a compromise to managing air tours over national parks which led to legislation and rulemaking, it is under threat from subsequent NPA actions. "The NPS issued a "Director's Order" which, if implemented, would give NPS de facto jurisdiction over airspace usage. MPS officials also are considering holding the compromise hostage unless language is changed to give park superintendents "total and unilateral control" over who flies over national parks". Bassett further stated "the national park overflight issue is no longer just about air touring, it's about the future of the American air transportation system... no segment of aviation is immune." He said the current public policy trend to restrict flights over national parks "will invite airspace management chaos over all public lands. There will be no way to stop other federal land management agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as Native American tribes from insisting that their agencies should have a say in the management of the airspace over all of their lands as well." Subcommittee Chairman James Hansen (Utah) stated "I have been on this committee for 20 years and I have seen the systematic closure of a number of customary uses by the NPS through new regulations, announcements, and general management plan interpretations. NPS, places paramount importance on the first part of the mission statement, to conserve the scenery, while demoting the second part of the mission, 'to provide for the enjoyment' by the public." Denis Galvin, deputy director for the NPS, said the agency "places great importance on and takes great pride in making the national parks accessible



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## Administrator's Column continued.....

to the public and providing for high-quality visitor experiences.” Further - “it is simply impossible to accommodate all uses in parks that people seek and yet comply with our congressionally mandated responsibility to avoid impairment of the resources under our stewardship.” Galvin noted the legislation and rulemaking effort regarding air tours establishes “a clear framework for (NPS and FAA) to develop rules and procedures to manage - not eliminate- this use. It should result in a reduction in the intrusive aircraft noise in national parks, which will improve access of the visiting public to the natural soundscapes of parks.” If it is true that the NPS can not accommodate all uses and not impair resources in parks then air tours should be encouraged as they require absolutely no infrastructure what-so-ever thus there is no cost to the taxpayer plus the airplane leaves no trace of ever having been there. If there is any aircraft air pollution, it has to be minuscule compared to the millions of cars, trucks, motor homes, and busses using national park roads every day and night. In addition to the air pollution left by these vehicles, think of the overwhelming and endless noise pollution they create. It appears from the facts that it's time for the NPS managers to not only take a good look their fiscal responsibilities but to also open their eyes and ears.....

### FAREWELL

*By Redge Meierhenry*

I am leaving the Aeronautics Division for employment in the Seattle area. Therefore, it is with some sadness that I must say farewell to all of my good friends here at the Aeronautics Division and the whole Aviation community. I hope my service to you all has been to your expectations. I am certain that in my absence you will find Mike Rogan, Jim Greil and Ken Wilhelm ably ready to assist you. To each and every aviation enthusiast, I wish good fortune and tailwinds always.



➔**ATTENTION:** Because of the many fires please avoid Airspace conflicts: Call the Flight Service Station at 1-800-WXBRIEF for current NOTAMs on temporary flight restrictions/TFRs.

## Montana State Fly-In and MPA Fall Fly-In and Board Meeting

This year's Montana State Fly-In will be held at Glacier Park International Airport and hosted by the Flathead Chapter in Kalispell, Montana on September 22-24. The Fly-In will be held in conjunction with the MPA Fall Fly-In and Board meeting.

Activities include flour bomb and take-off performance activities, a pig roast and live music after dinner on Saturday.

Tie-downs and fuel are available at both Glacier Park and Kalispell City Airport. However camping is only available at Kalispell City Airport, which also has hotels and restaurants within walking distance. Rental cars will be available at Glacier Park International.

For more information contact Lori Smith, VP Flathead Chapter, 406-752-6154 [LDSMITH@IKON.COM](mailto:LDSMITH@IKON.COM). Or check out the Montana Pilots Association website at [www.montanapilots.org](http://www.montanapilots.org).

## Calendar

**August 19** - Helena EAA Chapter 344 Fly-in breakfast 8 – 11 am at Air-Ryder Hangar at Helena Regional Airport. Call Bob Little (406)458-5379.

**August 19 – 20** – Fort Peck/Valley MPA Hangar Fly-in. Boating, water skiing, fishing, camping. Float planes invited.

**August 26** – Second Annual Fly-in Polson Airport. Call Tom Seabase 883-9392 or [aerowork@digisys.net](mailto:aerowork@digisys.net).

**September 1 – 4** – Montana Ultralight Fun Flyers Annual Fly-in, Silver City Airport. Everyone is welcome to fly-in or drive-in. Call Brian or Linda Lee (406)442-1701, email: [skryder@uswest.net](mailto:skryder@uswest.net).

**September 2 – 4** – Cleveland National Air Show, Burke Lakefront Airport, Cleveland, OH, [www.clevelandairshow.com](http://www.clevelandairshow.com).

**September 2 – 4** – West Yellowstone Labor Day Fly-in, Yellowstone Airport.

**September 9** – MAAA Fall Meeting – Seeley Lake Airport.

**September 9 – 10** – South Central Hangar Club Fall Fly-in, Laurel Airport.

**September 9 – 13** – NASAO 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show, Long Beach, CA.

**September 14 – 17** – Reno Air Races.

**September 15 – 17** – Mountain Search Pilot Clinic, Kalispell.

**September 16** – Dillon Aviation Days, call Dillon Flying Service (406)683-5242.

**September 16 – 17** – Oregon Air Fair 2000, Albany Fairgrounds. Info: NW Aviation Association (800)547-6922.

**September 21 – 23** – International Northwest Aviation Council Annual Conference, Jackson Hole, WY.

**September 22-24** – Montana State Fly-In held in conjunction with MPA Fall Fly-In and Board meeting. For more information call Lori Smith (406)752-6154 or email [LDSMITH@IKON.COM](mailto:LDSMITH@IKON.COM).

**September 30 – October 1** – Springfield Air Rendezvous 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Air Show featuring the USAF Thunderbird Demonstration Team, Capital Airport, Springfield, IL (217)789-4400.

**October 7** – Alvin & Barb Hirsch Fly-In, begins early a.m. with coffee, juice and donuts, games and a great lunch at noon. For further information call (406)354-6009.

**October 10 – 12** – National Business Aviation Association 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting & Convention, New Orleans, LA.

**October 20 – 22** – AOPA Expo 2000, Long Beach, CA.



# Meadow Creek and Spotted Bear Volunteer Work Session

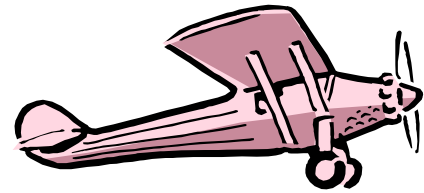
Many pilots, including family, interested persons, and U.S. Forest Service personnel turned out to accomplish much needed maintenance on the Meadow Creek and Spotted Bear airstrips. Work included filling gopher holes, installing new wind socks, clearing trails and runway approach of timber, repairing & painting out-houses, installing new bench & top planking on old camp site tables, installing new camp tables & fire pits at Spotted Bear, installing new sign & post, installing new tie-downs, cutting fire-wood for camp sites and more... The US Forest Service will be spraying knap weed at these airstrips with chemical provided by the Aeronautics Division. This cooperative maintenance support is necessary in order to keep these back country airstrips in safe and usable conditions. Everyone involved should be congratulated for a job well done.



*Cary Duncan & Herb Ballou just a few of the many volunteers that showed up for the work session assisted in replacing the sign & post.*



*Lanny Hanson puts in many hours each year in helping to maintain Montana's backcountry airstrips.*



*Doug Kinney installing & painting new tie-downs, it would not be possible to have such incredible places to fly in Montana without the help of these great people!*



*Jeff Morrison cleared the trails making it easier for hikers to enjoy the great hiking trails.*



*To assure the safety of pilots Chuck Jarecki helped out clearing timber at the end of the runway.*





*James Bryon installed new camp tabletops.*



*Clock-wise, Karen Kinney, Jeanie Bystrom and Wade Cebulski repaired and painted the outhouse which was in dire need of some maintenance.*



*The finished product, just one of many improvements made possible by the volunteers.*



*Montana Aeronautics Division left a new water cart and jugs, these improvements really made Meadow Creek an even better place to fly to, thanks so much to everyone!!!*



## 2000 Sentimental Journey

John Dove of Missoula recently completed the 2000 Sentimental Journey to Lock Haven. This was his first year to make the Sentimental Journey, and he certainly hopes there will be more to come. John & Fred Hasskamp from Hamilton flew in John's PA-12, NC3381M accompanied by Ron Purdum from Albany, OR who flew solo in his PA-12, N3978M.

Flying 23+ hours to get there was the first part of the fun. The good times continued for the rest of the week. Everything was exciting and thrilling, like the ride in Lee Gilbert's Russian advanced trainer L-39 Albatross.

John strongly urges everyone to make the Sentimental Journey to Lock Haven it was a tremendous experience he will always remember.



*Sig Ugrin greets John at the Miles City airport on the trip home. Sig maintained John's PA-12 for many years and was glad to see the airplane looking so good.*



*William T. Piper, Jr. congratulates John Dove on being awarded the Grand Champion Trophy for his PA-12. The PA-12 was the featured airplane this year which made the award more of a thrill and an extra special honor.*

## Aviation Education



*The Carroll College Aviation Summer program instructed by Jerry Hok visited the Helena Regional Airport their schedule included a preflight, an airplane ride and a tour of the tower where they were treated to a fly-by of two Stearman biplanes on their way to Oshkosh!*

## Attention

*By: Steven J. Jones  
Aviation Safety Inspector*

Sport aviation has one of the fastest growing recreational activities around. Amateur-Built aircraft and Ultralight vehicles are more popular than ever. Recently an accident involving an Amateur-Built aircraft brought to our attention an item that may pose a potential hazard to emergency personnel. Primarily those who are the first responders to an aircraft accident.

Several companies over the past few years have made a device that can be deployed by the pilot in case of a structural failure or some other predicament. The device uses a rocket deployed emergency parachute, sometimes called a ballistic parachute. You may encounter one of these devices at an accident site. While these devices are intended to save lives, they have the potential to cause injuries and even death to rescue workers.

To deploy the system, the pilot or passenger must pull the activating handle. If for some reason the ballistic parachute is not used, the safety personnel handling the accident are now confronted with a potentially dangerous device.

These systems are generally installed on Ultralight vehicles and Amateur-Built aircraft. BRS Inc. does have an approval for installing these systems on Cessna 150s and Cirrus Design's SR20. Both are factory built aircraft.

Information on how these systems work and the precaution that emergency workers should take can be located at our website at <http://www.faa.gov/fsdo/hln>. Click on **other aviation links**, scroll down to safety issues and click on **ballistic parachutes**.

BRS Inc. is only one of the manufacturers of these systems and we do not endorse either product over the product of another. They provide an excellent explanation of their system, which is similar to others. Various systems may be installed and we recommend that you always contact the manufacturer of the system installed.

We are attempting to get this information to as many people and agencies as possible. If you know of someone that may not have this information would you please forward it to them.



## College for Kids

Students at Libby were treated to a week of aeronautics at a summer youth program organized by Andrea Huisenruit, the community educator for the Lincoln County Campus of Libby, Montana.

As a part of the program, Kaye Ebel aerospace educator from Missoula took the students on an aerospace adventure, when she presented a “hands on”, fantasy of space flight. Al Bratkovich an educator from Libby presented,

“Bird Flight, how fast, how high and how far can birds fly?”

The students took to the skies when the aviation program spent the day at the Libby airport. Jeanne MacPherson of the Aeronautics Division led an aerodynamic presentation, preflight of the Bonanza and flew the new young eagles over Libby. After the flights, the students drew maps of Libby from a “birds eye view”.



*Eight-year-old students finish the preflight of the Bonanza.*



*Ready for lift off!*



## Barker Addresses Pilot Shortage Concerns

National Air Transportation Association (NATA) chair Linda Barker testified before a Senate Committee about the current pilot shortage. She addressed regulatory initiatives hampering attempts to bring pilot supply and demand back in check and also suggested ways to alleviate the strain that this condition is having on the aviation industry.

Barker appeared before the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation aviation Subcommittee at a hearing entitled “Pilot Shortages and How to Reduce their Impact on Air Service in Smaller and Rural Markets.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine how pilot shortages are having an impact on air service, particularly in rural and smaller communities, as well as to review recommendations that the federal government should take to alleviate these conditions.

Discussing the difficulties in hiring and retaining quality pilots, Barker commented on the dramatic increase in turnover for many of this nation’s aviation businesses. “Historically, the turnover rate for on-demand air charter operators was 5 to 10 percent annually”, said Barker. “During the last two years, these rates have climbed to 50 percent or higher.”

Barker went on to explain that while

the aviation industry attempts to bring the pilot supply and demand for services into balance, external factors such as federal government regulatory initiatives can exacerbate the problem. “There is a great deal of anxiety that the FAA will again attempt to subject Part 135 on-demand air charter operators to a ‘one-size-fits-all’ flight and duty regulation identical to the regulations for scheduled airlines,” stated the NATA chair. “This unnecessary action would have devastation effects on the industry and create a massive shutdown of many Part 135 operators based on the inability to hire more pilots.”

Another federally mandated initiative to review, according to Barker, is the need for Congress to consider whether the current requirement for airline pilots to retire at age 60 is still necessary. “As you can imagine, allowing pilots to continue working for an airline past 60 years of age would decrease the need for new pilots while expanding the number of experienced pilots serving the traveling public,” she explained.

The Agency’s effort to harmonize flight crew licensing with European standards is another FAA activity that could also adversely affect pilot shortages. “The FAA

should not take any action that would threaten the affordability and efficiency of pilot training and licensing that has been the hallmark of our country,” Barker stated. “Regulatory changes that impair the ability to train pilots and adversely affect flight schools would then ripple across the entire industry.”

As an example of a program that can foster partnerships for pilot training, the NATA chair referred to a joint program between the Business Aviation of School of Aeronautics and South Dakota State University’s College of Education where graduates will not only be Certified Flight Instructors but also Certified Teachers. “I encourage the FAA to support this partnership as well as others that may be unique and do not fit the traditional pattern for training,” concluded Barker. “These partnerships are critical if we are to meet the need for additional pilots.”



# Governor's Task Force Meets

The Governor's Essential Air Service Task Force met in Billings last month. Chairman John Rabenberg honored John Kubesh of Glendive for his many years of service to the task force. John has retired from this assignment and has been replaced by Elmer Egli.

Big Sky Airlines conducted a presentation depicting its: year-to-date traffic statistics for each of the seven Montana essential air service points; operations performance; and Northwest connections for each EAS point.

In other business, the group discussed a proposed rule to Part 139, Certification of Airports that has the potential of having serious negative impact on Montana's EAS airports. A conference call arranged for and moderated by Senator Conrad Burns' staff with the Director of Airport Safety and Standards at the FAA in Washington DC helped answer many questions of the task force. The group and each individual community will be making formal comments on the proposal.

Discussion regarding the moratorium imposed by the FAA regarding the cancellation of weather observation contracts at loca-

tions in Montana, leaving no human backup to the ASOS systems took place. Concern over the unreliability of these ASOS systems was expressed. The task force will submit a letter to FAA Administrator Jane Garvey voicing these concerns.

An EAS fly-around has been scheduled for September 13-14. Each EAS representative will be planning an event in their respective community.

Essential air service representatives include: John Rabenberg, Chairman, Wolf Point; Walt McNutt, Sidney; Bret Carpenter, Lewistown; Ray Tweeten, Havre; Brad Schmidt, Miles City; Elmer Egli, Glendive; and Pete Pederson, Glasgow.

Twenty seven hundred copies of this public document were produced at an estimated cost of 39 cents each, for a total cost of \$1,053. This includes \$120 for production, \$713 for postage and \$220 for printing.



*Chairman John Rabenberg of Wolf Point presents a plaque of commendation for John Kubesh of Glendive. The task force honored John for his many years of service and dedication to the EAS task force. Accepting the plaque for John is Elmer Egli of Glendive. Elmer will be replacing John on the task force representing the community of Glendive.*

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